

CT Colonography is an X-ray procedure of the large bowel. This information explains how it is done, what to expect and the risks involved.

What to expect during the procedure

- On the day/days before your procedure you will be asked to take some preparation to cleanse the bowel. It is essential that you follow these instructions to ensure a successful examination. You cannot have the procedure if you do not take the preparation.
- When you arrive for your examination you will be given an explanation of the procedure and any questions you have will be answered.
- You will be asked to lie on the CT scanner table and a small tube will be inserted into the rectum (back passage). If you wish, you may have a support person with you while the tube is inserted.
- Carbon Dioxide gas (CO₂) is then gently introduced through the tube; this dilates the bowel and allows the inside surface of the bowel to be clearly seen on the CT Scans. This part of the procedure can cause discomfort.
- Once the bowel is sufficiently dilated a series of CT scans will be taken with you lying in different positions.
- You will receive an injection of a medication called Buscopan that relaxes the bowel muscles.
- You should start to feel relief from any discomfort immediately the procedure is completed.

What happens after the procedure?

- You may resume your normal diet.
- Buscopan may cause blurry vision. This is temporary, but we ask you not to drive or operate machinery for 1 hour after the procedure
- A Radiologist will study your scans and have a report sent to your referring Doctor.

Are there any medical conditions that may stop me having this procedure?

Yes, there are some medical conditions that may mean that we are unable to do the procedure.

Please refer to your preparation sheet for further information.

When you arrive in the department we will ask you to fill in a questionnaire regarding your medical history that helps us decide the best way to perform the procedure.

Consent for the procedure

You will be asked to read this information again before your procedure and be given some time with a member of staff who will answer any questions that you have.

You (or power of attorney/legal guardian if appropriate) will be asked to sign a consent form if you wish to have the procedure performed. No other person can sign this form for you.

You have the right to refuse this procedure, ask for additional information or have an alternative staff member perform your procedure.

Are there any risks?

CT Colonography is generally regarded as a very safe test. Problems can occur, but they are rare.

As with all medical procedures there are risks involved.

Problems which might occur are similar to those which can happen with other methods of examining the large bowel. These include:

- Mild abdominal discomfort which settles
- “faint-like” reactions
- Damage to the bowel wall (there may be a small tear in the lining of the colon or rectum; this happens in fewer than 1 in 3000 tests)
- Dehydration or an electrolyte imbalance caused by the laxative. It is important that you drink plenty of fluids - your diet sheet will give you this information
- Allergic reaction to any injected medications
- Like any X-ray examination, this test uses radiation. We will keep the radiation dose as low as possible.

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You must seek urgent medical treatment if you experience

- Loss of vision, pain and redness of the eye caused by the Buscopan
- Severe abdominal pain

For emergencies CALL 111 or contact your

- local After Hours Centre
- local Hospital Emergency Department

Comments/Complaints

If you have any comments or suggestions please tell one of the staff before you leave, or contact the Customer Experience Facilitator on 0800 999 442.

Are there alternatives to this procedure?

Your doctor has considered the benefits, risks and alternatives available and feels that this is the best procedure for you.

There are two other ways of looking at the large bowel:

- barium enema and colonoscopy:

- **Barium** enema has been available for many years but does not provide as much information for doctors and is often more uncomfortable for patients. We no longer routinely perform this procedure as we feel CT Colonography is a better test.
- **Colonoscopy** is the standard way of examining the large bowel. A thin tube with a camera on the end (colonoscope) is passed into the back passage and moved up and around the bowel. The procedure is more invasive than CT Colonography, requires sedation and has a slightly higher complication rate. However, it does allow tissue to be removed for testing (biopsy) or polyp removal if needed.

These two tests will only give us information about your large bowel. CT Colonography also provides information about the other structures inside your abdomen.

General

There are no lockable facilities in Radiology. We strongly recommend that any valuables are left at home.

Please be aware that CCDHB does not take responsibility for any loss or damage of personal property belonging to patients whilst on CCDHB premises

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